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ГОДИШНИК НА СОФИЙСКИЯ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ "СВ. КЛИМЕНТ ОХРИДСКИ"
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THE RUSSIAN-BYZANTINE TREATY OF 971: TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

MIKHAIL RAEV

A decade ago I published a paper on the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971, its textual transmission into the mediaeval Rus literary work known as the Povest' Vremennykh Let (PVL or the Primary Chronicle), and how a metathesis in the name of one of the signatories – Bishop Theophilos – illustrates corruption of historical data transferred from Byzantine tenth-century works into the twelfth-century Rus treatise. The Byzantine author John Skylitzes, who was working in the second part of the eleventh century, names Theophilos Bishop of Euchaita in the context of 971 events. John Zonaras, his copier, abridges this story in terms of details. In the second half of the tenth century, Leo the Deacon, another Byzantine author, names a bishop of Euchaita Philotheos. In 963 Philotheos went on a mission to Patriarch Polyeuktos to arrange a truce between the rivalling parties for guardianship upon Basil and Constantine, sons of Emperor Romanos II (959-963). Leo the Deacon also mentions Philotheos' mission to Bulgarian court to arrange marriages between two Bulgarian princesses and the young emperors in 969. This was the last occasion when he was mentioned in Leo's narrative. Several lead seals discovered in former Byzantine and Bulgarian lands confirm that in the second part of the tenth century the bishop of Euchaita was named Philotheos. Since no Theophilos' seal had been discovered by 2004-2006, my research prompted me to propose that the metathesis of "Philotheos" into "Theophilos" indicated a common written source on Russian-Byzantine hostilities shared independently by the Primary Chronicle and John Skylitzes. (Raev 2006/2007, 329-340)

Pre-industrial societies relayed historical data through oral accounts or ballads, and through written records. Oral conveyance distorts data through abridgements, temporal and physical displacements, and fictional admixtures; it is unable to fix precise dates and places. While text circumscribes these shortcomings, authorial views can interfere with fidelity, but may be overcome by collating two or more copies of the original source or versions of described events.

Here I examine the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 in terms of texts and their contexts. Data on the hostilities in Byzantine and Russian sources set the historical context. A brief outline of the scholarly discourse on the textual accumulation of the Primary Chronicle, its sources and composers, follows. I then propose the possible

form and content of the original treaty. Next comes an explanation of discrepancies between the terms recorded in Byzantine sources and the Primary Chronicle. The outline of Russian-Byzantine relations in my earlier article provides the next context; here, it highlights the manner in which the Russian composer tailored the Russian-Byzantine treaty to fit the narrative context of the Primary Chronicle – an issue I identified a decade ago.

1. The historical context

The Russian-Byzantine treaty followed July 971 negotiations between Prince Sviatoslav and Emperor John Tzimiskes at Dristra, Bulgaria. It is the end result of their hostilities between 969 and 971. There are discrepancies in the sources on whether the Rus launched one or two campaigns against Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire; whether the Rus were allied with the Byzantines in the first campaign and the Bulgarians in the second; and on their original plans. (Карышковский 1952, 127-138; Карышковский 1953, 37-71; Stokes 1961, 44-57; Stokes 1962, 468-473) I touched upon part of these questions earlier (Raev 2006/2007, 329-340), while others are irrelevant to the examination of the treaty.

Several other issues need to be taken into account: whether the Byzantine Empire concluded treaties with non-Christians and barbarians; what form those treaties took; and whether their terms have been recorded and stored. The answers to these questions will help reinstate the putative form and content of the Russian-Byzantine treaty and help explain the differences between the terms conveyed in Byzantine sources and the Primary Chronicle.

Studies and explanations by a number of researchers over the recent two centuries allow the reasonably safe understanding that the late descriptions of events in the 960s and 970s reflect loyalty or disloyalty of their underlying sources to the Macedonian, Lekapenos, Phokas, or Skleros dynasties. (Сюзюмов 1916, 106-166; Карышковский 1952, 127-138; Иванов, 1981, 88-100; Talbot-Sullivan 2005, 14-15; and Бибиков 2004, 81-88, Holmes 2005, 91-119, 240-298) Leo the Deacon on the one hand, and John Skylitzes and John Zonaras on the other, rework these sources differently in shaping them to their aims. The issue of similarities between Skylitzes and Zonaras, and whether the latter abridged the former or they had a common source, as well as the issue on Zonaras' sources given their examination by Chernoglazov, are beyond the scope of this study. (Иванов 1982, 77; Черноглазов, 2004, 137-154) As regards the events of 971, Kaldellis suggests that Byzantine sources reflect a Byzantine court report on the glorious campaign of Emperor John Tzimiskes in a dissimilar way through narrative techniques borrowed from the ancient literature. (Kaldellis 2013, 9-18)

Leo the Deacon has Sviatoslav and John Tzimiskes agreeing on the Rus' withdrawal from Bulgaria thus: the Rus leave Dristra to the Byzantines, release captives, and return to their homeland. The Byzantines allow the Rus to retreat unhurried by Greek fire, and agree to supply them with provisions and to consider Rus merchants in Constantinople friends (Leonis Diakoni 1828, 155_{20}-156_{5}; Leo the Deacon 2005, 198-199).

Skylitzes records the following: 1. Sviatoslav demands the Rus be considered

Byzantine friends and allies; 2. The Byzantines guarantee safe return to the Rus; 3. The Byzantines accept all Rus merchants who arrive to Constantinople for commerce.

The PVL offers the following: 1. Sviatoslav would keep the peace with Basil II and Constantine VIII; 2. The Rus should not attack, despatch, or allow passage, of or to armies against Byzantium, Bulgaria, and Chersoneses; 3 The Rus would fight as Byzantine allies against any threat to Byzantium; 4. The Rus and Byzantines should adhere to this agreement.

Most likely the Rus and the Byzantines agreed on the following, as extracted from Byzantine sources: the Rus would depart from Bulgaria for their homeland, releasing captives; the Byzantines would not attack the Rus and would supply them with food; the Byzantines would consider the Rus friends and allies and would restore the pre-war status of Rus merchants.

Skylitzes claims that the Byzantines also offered the Pechenegs a similar agreement: to consider them friends and allies if they stopped raiding Byzantium. Skylitzes adds that the Rus asked for Byzantine assistance in traversing Pecheneg lands, but that the Byzantines were unsuccessful. (Scylitzae 1973, 309_{34}- 310_{73})

This detail in Skylitzes invites an examination of whether the Rus, whom the Byzantines did not perceive as much different from the Pechenegs, negotiated verbally with the latter. A comparison of the Byzantine approach and perception of Northern peoples yields a few more parallels between the Rus, the Pechenegs, and the Magyars. Chapters 1 and 4 of Constantine VII's *De Administrando* instruct on how the Byzantine should conclude agreements with the Pechenegs. They should send special proxies or envoys (ἀποκρισιάριος) to distribute bribes and gifts and collect hostages. Constantine VII judged that if the Pechenegs were at peace with Byzantium, they shall not allow the Rus to trespass, and might moreover themselves attack the Rus, Magyars, and Bulgarians. If the Emperor were at peace with the Pechenegs, Magyars and Bulgarians would be unable to attack Byzantium and extort gifts or tribute. Regular letters and gifts extended friendly relations with the Pechenegs. Later the text specifies that for more important missions, imperial officers bearing multitudes of gifts would be sent from Chersoneses or directly from Constantinople. (*De Administrando* 1967, 48-57)

Chapter 48 of another treatise also associated with Constantine VII, *De cerimoniis*, instructs that a gold seal weighing two solidi should be affixed to letters sent to Rus, Pecheneg, and Magyar dignitaries. (*De cerimoniis* II, 1829-1840, 690-691) The Byzantine prejudice against the Rus may also be gleaned from relations with the Magyars. Skylitzes writes that two Magyar chieftains visited Constantinople between 946 and the 950s to be baptised. Olga, the wife of the Rus ruler, also adopted Christianity in the Byzantine metropolis at that time. The Emperor, Empress, and other royals acted as spiritual sponsors. (Scylitzae 1973, 239_{69}-240_{81}) In this context Byzantine sources record the visit of Nikephoros II's envoy to the Rus ruler Sviatoslav. The Emperor sent Kalokyros, son of Chersoneses' governor, to distribute bribes and incite an attack on Bulgaria. (Leonis Diakoni 1828, 63_{5}-$_{13}$; Leo the Deacon 2005, 111-112; Scylitzae, 1973, 277_{27-31}) The date of Kalokyros' mission is under dispute due to ambiguities in the written sources and is placed between 966 and 969.

These data allow a glimpse into the negotiation process between Sviatoslav

and John Tzimiskes. Since no data could support a hypothesis on the spread of any Slavonic or Greek literacy amongst the Rus elite and society prior to the Rus adoption of Christianity, any Rus graphic system probably rested on Scandinavian or Turkic runes. Yet, their wider application should be further testified archaeologically. It would be a wild surmise to propose that the Rus got a document stating only Byzantine obligations without putting down their own. It is possible that they received several letters of acknowledgement and special seals which their merchants should had brought with them when advancing the custom agents in Byzantine ports. Some thirty years ago, J. Shepard published a typical Byzantine seal of that time found in Ukraine which could have been used for similar purposes. (Shepard 1986, 252–74) The Byzantine-Bulgarian treaty of 716 obliged merchants to present seals and charters when delivering goods to the Byzantine Empire, and the Byzantine sources testify that the 971 treaty adhered to this administrative practice. (Theophanes 1883, p. $497_{16–26}$)

It is rather unlikely that the PVL presents a genuine version of the treaty, since it not only differs entirely from the terms outlined in Byzantine sources on the close of Byzantine-Rus hostilities, but also sets out only Rus' duties. The treaty was concluded with John Tzimiskes and his co-rulers, extending its validity until the end of their reigns. The recording of Rus' duties was not a singular diplomatic practice, agreeing rather well with diplomatic protocol laid down in the reign of Justinian I (527 – 565) following the Persian wars. It was described by Menander Protector and examined carefully by A. Dimitriu who distinguishes four peace negotiation stages. In the first, the parties exchange two documents: a letter of accreditation, and a paper with minimum and maximum demands. Each party then prepares a draft peace treaty in its language, outlining its own duties. In the second stage, these drafts are translated into the other language and the original and translation are collated. In the third stage, the treaty charters in Greek and Persian are clearly written down, each side using its own diplomatic formulae. Next, the document with the treaty are exchanged, and the Persians return to their ruler with the chart of Byzantine duties in Greek and its Persian translation. The process ends with both rulers ratifying the treaty. (Димитриу 1895, 531–550)

The rest of tenth-century Russian-Byzantine treaties, and eleventh-/twelfth-century Byzantine treaties with Italian city-republics, whose aspects Malingoudi examines profoundly, have both parties listing their duties in one document translated into both languages. For this reason the 971 treaty is an exception from the dominant diplomatic practice of its time. (Малингуди 1995, 70-74; Малингуди 1996, 58-61) A further observation is particularly relevant when examining the treaty. Studying its preamble, S. Kashtanov notes that it has format and formulae analogies with twelfth- and thirteenth-centuries Rus treaties. (Каштанов 1976, 72)

So, what was the language of 971 treaty? There is no hint whatever of Greek being popular among the Rus prior to the adoption of Christianity, unlike its popularity among the Bulgarians in similar circumstances. So how did the Byzantines deal with Rus heathen warlords who had not used Slavonic or Greek in their administration?

The Byzantines signed treaties with non-Christian Persians and Arabs. Other non-Christians they dealt with were the Bulgarians and the stone inscriptions found

in Bulgaria testify to the varied aspects of their contacts. (Бешевлиев 1992, 36-37, 164-185) Thus the issue was not religion, but literacy, *i.e.* whether the barbarian people used a graphic system or not for diplomatic issues. Even when writings have only been inferred, as in the case of the Rus who presumably used runes prior to baptism, there is evidence that the Byzantine court was in correspondence with them. *De cerimoniis* instructs that the Emperor's correspondence to Rus rulers should bear two solidi gold seals, but we know of no replies to this correspondence. One may volunteer a wild guess that Byzantine letters might have been read and interpreted aloud in the court of the Rus prince, and further as to whether the answer of the Rus ruler might have been verbal or written. Most likely the Byzantine Emperor's encyclical letter was similar in content to the one send the Pechenegs to assure their allegiance through presents, bribes, and the taking of noble hostages of which *De Administrando* informs. Although hostages were not taken when letters were sent to the Rus, Leo the Deacon's and John Skylitzes' references to Kalokyros' mission before the Rus' campaign have him bribing the Rus nobility to attack Bulgaria.

These issues led scholars to varied opinions. For instance, Sakharov considers the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 as preserved in the PVL to be a draft, and hence its text as close to the original. (Сахаров 1982, 183-203) Malingoudi argues that since the treaty is not the same in form as previous Russian-Byzantine treaties, it should most likely have been different due to the applied procedure of its conclusion. She cannot date the translation and despatch of the 971 treaty from Byzantium to Kiev, but places the two events between 971 and 1116. (Малингуди 1996, 87) P Tolochko reasons that the Russian-Byzantine treaties were translated into Slavonic in the reign of Vladimir Sviatoslavich and were included in a work resembling a chronicle in the tenth century. In the early twelfth century, the composer of the PVL copied these treaties from this work. (Толочко 2008, 67-68)

Opposite to these views, the observations above allow me to propose that instead of a Russian-Byzantine written treaty, we rather have an annual bilateral agreement or one renewed at certain intervals. The written form of this agreement is rather uncertain since it might have been a verbal one.

2. Textual accumulation of the Primary Chronicle.

Textual analyses by several eighteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars on a number of manuscripts containing the Primary Chronicle establish that the original work had been composed in Kiev in the 1110s. (Ostrowski 2003, XXI-XL) Between the 1890s and the 1920s, A. Shakhmatov has revoked a number of interpretations proposed by his predecessors and offered a plethora of explanations and hypotheses accommodating the textual imperfections, discrepancies, and contradictions in the examined manuscripts. Ultimately he proposed that the Primary Chronicle was written in the Kievan Caves Monastery in the 1110s based on early chronicles like the Drevneishii Svod (1030s) and Nachal'nyii Svod (1090s). Based on an analysis of the Novgorod First Chronicle, Shakhmatov suggested that intermediary works like the Ancient Novgorod Chronicle (1030s), the Compilation (1070s), and a number of other works explain snippets of data supposedly transmitted over time by written records. (Шахматов 2002, 23-30, 123-135, 270-358)

Shakhmatov considers that the Primary Chronicle was first copied in 1116 by Silvester, abbot of the St Michael's Monastery of Vydobitsk. This version was further appended with several continuations. A manuscript copied by the monk Laurence in 1377 is proposed to contain the best readings of these works. The second version of the Primary Chronicle, reproduced in 1118 in the Kievan Caves Monastery, has been amplified with a number of southern Rus continuations. Its copy had been kept in the Hypatian monastery near Kostroma. Its manuscript dates from the mid-fifteenth century. Since the original Primary Chronicle does not survive, its two basic versions and their related manuscripts are identified in the historiography as its second and third redactions. (Словарь 1987, 337 and 340)

All manuscripts containing the Primary Chronicle carried all four Russian-Byzantine treaties under annual entries for 907, 912, 945, and 971. They do not feature in existing thirteenth- to fifteenth-century manuscripts of the Novgorod First Chronicle. This work has two redactions: the older, preserved in a 1350s Synod manuscript, and the newer found in a number of fifteenth-century manuscripts such as the Commission's and the Academy's ones. As the first sixteen quires of the former, covering events up to 1016, are missing, Shakhmatov hypothesised their text could be identified in Trinity manuscript of the Novgorod Fifth Chronicle. (Словарь 1987, 245-247)

Apart from the treaties, the Novgorod First Chronicle is missing large excerpts from the Chronicle of George the Monk, as well as other pieces of information found in the Primary Chronicle. Researchers have examined two theories. First, the Novgorod First Chronicle could be delivering the text of earlier compilations to the Primary Chronicle. Second, the Primary Chronicle's text might have been abridged in the Novgorod First Chronicle. A. Shakhmatov propounded the first theory, while S. Bugoslavskii found arguments in favour of the second. (Бугославский 1941, 34) Given his personal reputation and authority, most of Shakhmatov's followers elaborate on his grandiose scheme of Primary Chronicle textual transmission, while a much smaller group of scholars furthers some arguments developed in Bugoslavskii's antithesis.

To accommodate the inconsistencies and contradictions in the data provided by the available manuscripts, Shakhamtov offers a number of hypothetical abridgments in the form of conjured treatises which he placed in pre-Primary Chronicle stages of historical data accumulation. One such work he claims to be an abridged version of the Chronicle of George the Monk which differed from the available Slavonic translation of the same work. Shakhmatov supposes that it was a version translated in Bulgaria. (Шахматов 1940, 41) His colleague V. Istrin – who published the Slavonic translation of the Chronicle of George the Monk – disagrees on two major points with him. He argues that Shakhmatov's stemma is too complex and proposes that there were not more than two individual chronicles prior to the Primary one; the rest, if proved, he considers their mere continuations. (Истрин 1924, 222-251) To back his conjecture, Istrin opposes the idea of Bulgarian translation of the Chronicle of George the Monk and proposes a reduced version translated in Kievan Rus and named by him the *Khronograph po velikomu izlozheniu*. (Истрин 1922, 418) The introduction of such translation or treatise would not explain the Byzantine data

inserted in the Primary Chronicle following 948, since the extant Slavonic translation of the Chronicle of George the Monk abbreviates at this point, as do many of its Byzantine manuscripts.

A much simpler explanation than hypothesising unrecorded Slavonic works would be to conjecture that a Byzantine Greek manuscript was used in the Primary Chronicle since some Byzantine manuscripts of the Chronicle of George the Monk convey it along with its post 948 continuation. The Chronicle of George the Monk (Γεώργιος Ἁμαρτωλός) itself was produced after 843 and its manuscript tradition is rather complex. It was appended with a continuation copied from the Chronicle of Simeon Logothete for 843 to 948. Some of these composite works continue with texts on Byzantine politics and warfare as late as 1143. (Markopoulos 1983, 280)

3. The Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 in the context of data transfer

Editing texts and adapting them to commissioners' requirements was a common mediaeval practice. It affected any manuscript as to its composition and arrangement of copied works. Occam's Razor would favour the simpler explanation of Bugoslavskii and his followers that the Novgorod First Chronicle renders an edited and shortened text of the Primary Chronicle. T. Vilkul supports this explanation by pointing out that a number of paragraph and phrase citations from the Slavonic translation of George the Monk's Chronicle could be found in the Novgorod First Chronicle, contradicting Shakhmatov and Istrin's opinion that it reflects an earlier translation of an abridgement of George the Monk's Chronicle, not identical with the existing one. (Вилкул 2003, 5-35; Вилкул 2014, 11-20)

Malingoudi contributes to the dispute by proposing that copies of the tenth-century Russian-Byzantine treaties were commissioned in Constantinople and then sent to Kiev between 971 and 1116. Malingoudi hypothesises that each treaty was accompanied by a brief explanation of the circumstances giving rise to it. (Малингуди 1996, 83-87) S. Kashtanov advances this hypothesis by suggesting that Kievan metropolitan Nikephoros I commissioned this information transfer. (Каштанов 1996, 42)

The following particulars indicate that a chronicle mediated between the Byzantine and medieval Russian chronicles: two Sviatoslav's Balkan campaigns in the Primary Chronicle follow the basic chronology found in Byzantine authors Skylitzes and Zonaras; the similarity in historical details such as the place names of Preslav and Dristra; Sviatoslav's speeches and refusal of Byzantine ransom; the Byzantine envoys sent to Sviatoslav; actions such as the transfer of warfare and peace negotiations from Preslav to Dristra; the rendering of identical leading characters such as Prince Sviatoslav, Emperor John Tzimiskes, and Sveneld; the metathesis in the name of Theophilos; the Pecheneg ambush of Sviatoslav's army; common dates: month, year and indiction of the Russian-Byzantine treaty at Dristra. All these details would have been transferred by text from Byzantium to Kievan Rus.

In the early nineteenth century, August Ludwig von Schlözer hypothesised in his monumental work on the Russian chronicles that significant portions of their texts on pre-Christian Russian history came from the Byzantine chronicle of Kedrinos. P. Stroev corrected this view by drawing attention to the reference to George the Monk

in the PVL and comparing its text with the Chronicle of George the Monk. He found out seven similar places. (Строев 1828, 167-183)

With or without prejudice to Shakhmatov's putative proposal of earlier Bulgarian or Slavonic historical work that transmitted information on ninth- and tenth-century Byzantine and Bulgarian events in the Ancient Compilation, one may agree with him that a written source supplied these pieces of data. Such a work has not been found and will most likely never be found since it was most probably a singleton. Kashtanov's scenario might be taken into account, but with Metropolitan Nikephoros II commissioning copies of Byzantine historical texts to be delivered to Kiev instead of treaties. As noted above, part of the Byzantine manuscripts of the Chronicle of George the Monk did continue post-948 – for instance, the Benaki-Museum Ἀνταλλαξίμων 131 – and their content depended on the commissioner. (SMLC 2006, 29*)

Benaki-Museum Ἀνταλλαξίμων 131	c. 1422	1r-197r	Chronicle of George the Monk
		177v-197r	Part of Logothete chronicle (Basil I)
		197v-212r	Continuation of the Chronicle from Constantine VII to John II Komnenos
		213r-215v	Menandros' Sententiae
		216r-217v	Fragment of Menaeon

The content of the Benaki-Museum Ἀνταλλαξίμων 131 conveying the text of the Chronicle of George the Monk mixed with other works.

Other manuscripts witnessing the process of mixing and editing the Chronicles of Simeon the Logotethe and George the Monk are also Holkhamensis Gr. 60 (SMLC 2006, 33*), Messanensis S. Salvatoris 85 (De Boor 1901, 70-77), Monacensis gr. 139 (SMLC 2006, 34*), and Vaticanus gr. 154 (Mercati 1928, 176-177) . If we compare these manuscripts with the reworked historical data in John Skylitzes, his copier Kedrinos, and John Zonaras, all of whom copied similar texts tailoring them differently, we might conclude that a manuscript with excerpts of historical works would have arrived in Kiev in the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth century. Thurn thus believes that Skylitzes copied Genesios for most of the text on Leo V's to Michael III's reigns, Theophanes Continuatus from the end of the latter's reign to 948, and some data from Constantine VII, Leo the Deacon and Theodoros of Sebastia. (Scylitzae 1973, VIII) Yet, Skylitzes' faithful copier George Kedrinos (aka Cedrenus) appends his work to other historical works of Theophanes, Patriarch Nikephoros, George the Monk, Little Genesis and a number of other ecclesiastical sources. (Georgius Cedrenus 1838, 3-6)

It is more probable that the information on Sviatoslav's campaigns would have arrived to Kiev in a single manuscript written in Greek rather than two different ones, one or both of which translated into Slavonic. I find more likely that this manuscript was used once in the composition of the PVL instead of being consulted twice over two or more generations. Hence, we may reluctantly conclude that in spite of A. Shakhmatov's inspiring theories, the data on Sviatoslav's campaign was first inserted

in the Primary Chronicle, later being reworked and cut in the Novgorod Chronicles. Yet, by this I still agree with many researchers between the nineteenth century and A. Timberlake and D. Ostrowski most recently that in the Primary Chronicle's text one finds two stages of work undertaken by two scribes. One of them was Monk Basil who left the annual entry under 1097 and was associated with events related to the blinding of Kniaz Vassilko. The theory is that after scribe A finished, scribe B took over and reworked the text. (Timberlake 2002, 196-218; D. Ostrowski 2011, 229-253) For the purposes of this examination it would suffice to infer that a Byzantine chronicle which included part of the Chronicle of Simeon the Logothete on tenth-century events (along with its continuation following 948 that also covered at least the reigns of Nikephoros II Phokas and John I Tzimiskes - if not also information about the Byzantine endeavours of Vladimir) was the source of information on Byzantine and Bulgarian ninth- and tenth-century events in the original Primary Chronicle. Most likely, it was close to Skylitzes' and Kedrinos' works, given the aforementioned metathesis of Philotheos. Though the following note is generally agreed to hint to the Chronicle of George the Monk and its continuation in its Slavonic translation, the Greek Chronicle might as well mean a Byzantine chronicle:

В лѣ҃.ѯѕ.ѓ.ѯ. [6360 (852)] индикта .е́ı. наченшю Михаилу ц҃рьствовати. нача сѧ прозывати Рускаӱ земла ѡ семъ бо оувѣдахо᷍. ꙗко пр᷍и се᷍ ц҃ри приходиша Русь. на Ц҃рьгра᷍. ꙗко же писашеть в лѣтописании Грѣцко᷍ (PSRL 1908, 12; PSRL 1926, 18)

The content of Benaki-Museum Ἀνταλλαξίμων 131 miscellany manuscript shows that such Byzantine manuscript might also have included all or part of the Chronicle of George the Monk. On the other hand, should one considers the two-stage composition of Primary Chronicle, it is probable that the reference to this Greek Chronicle early in the undated part of the Primary Chronicle might have been added later, when its Slavonic translation of the chronicle of George the Monk became available in Kiev.

Гл́ть Гешргии в лѣтописьцѣ ибо комуждо ꙗзыку ѡвѣмь законъ исп᷍санъ єсть

(PSRL 1908, 11; PSRL 1926, 15) This issue has to be addressed further in future research.

Shakhmatov argues that only Paragraph 6 is a verbatim transposition of text from the known Chronicle of George the Monk's Slavonic translation into the Primary Chronicle. (Шахматов 1940, 46-47) He hypothesises that it was the unrecorded Bulgarian translation of the Chronicle of George the Monk with its continuation that played a vital role in PVL composition. Some references are mixed with another chronographic composition. (Шахматов 1940, 41-61) Shakhmatov, Istrin and almost all their followers try to explain PVL data on 960s' and 970s' Byzantium and Bulgaria (partly overlapping Leo the Deacon and other Byzantine authors) by a number of hypothetical works. Much like my proposed Byzantine manuscript with excerpts on world, Byzantine, Bulgarian, and Russian ninth-/tenth-century relations and events from the Chronicles of George the Monk and Simeon Logothete, these scholars cannot prove or find such works.

One may further hypothesise as to the possible commissioner of scribe of such

a manuscript. He has to fulfil several criteria: be Byzantine or has good connections with Byzantine centres of literacy; speaks Greek; occupies high office or has senior Kievan links; has connections with or be of the Kievan Caves monastic community; has literary inclinations. S. Kashtanov proposes one such commissioner: Kievan Rus' most senior cleric Metropolitan Nikephoros (1104-1121). Byzantine-born, he was well educated, connected with the scriptoria of many Constantinopolitan monasteries, and involved with the Kievan court and the Caves Monastery. He penned several anti-Latin works. (Полянский – Громов 2006, 28) Here I would venture another candidate for consideration: the monk Nicholas Sviatosha. Kniaz Sviatoslav Davidovich of Lutzk in lay life, he is named as entering the monastic community in Lecture 20 of the Kievan Caves Monastery Paterikon. Sviatosha lived in the Monastery from 1107 until his death in 1143, receiving a separate cell some years after his monastic vows. During his life he had acquired many books, ordered translations from Byzantine Greek into Slavonic, and left his library to the Monastery. In lay life, he had fought in the fratricidal Kievan succession campaign in which Kniaz Vassilko was blinded in 1097 (Dimnik 2006, 258–265; Franklin 2002, 30).

The association of the Primary Chronicle composer to the princely court is substantiated by the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 as it follows the basic composition rules of a regular twelfth-/thirteenth-century treaty given Kashtanov's findings above. The high-level connection might also explain why two late eleventh-/early twelfth-century original Russian-Byzantine treaties were reused and tailored for insertion into the Primary Chronicle on tenth-century events. Some of their original features transpire in their texts, but this will be a subject of follow-up research.

4. The text of the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971

So, what did the original Russian-Byzantine agreement of 971 included? Three versions of it exist: in the Primary Chronicle, by Leo the Deacon, and by John Skylitzes. A collation of their terms reveals serious discrepancies, but which of these terms did the original treaty comprise?

Most likely, snippets of the agreement reached Leo and Skylitzes from a common source. Hence the common places that both sources convey: 1. The Rus agreeing to leave Bulgaria, return to their homeland, and free captives; 2. The Byzantines agreeing not to harry Rus retreat and supply them with provisions; 3. The Byzantines agreeing to consider the Rus friends and allies; 4. The Byzantines restoring the status Rus merchants had before the 969-971 war.

Given the above outline of the terms in section 1 it is only Skylitzes' first term that could be interpreted as being placed third in the PVL. What could explain such sharp information discrepancy between Byzantine sources and the Primary Chronicle? One reason could be different and independent sources. The textual connections between Skylitzes and the PVL pointed out in section 3 reject this explanation.

These issues, along with the discrepancies between Byzantine and Primary Chronicle records of treaty provisions and the similarities between Skylitzes and the PVL on the Rus campaigns, call for a complex explanation.

5. The literary functions of the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 within the composition of the PVL

The discrepancies in the written sources on the treaty of 971 could well be explained in the light of D. Ostrowski's observation – following an analysis of Pseudo-Methodios' accounts in the PVL – that mediaeval Russian authors were careful about the way they used sources. (Ostrowski 2014, 237) The PVL composer reworked information on Sviatoslav's campaigns from a source similar to Skylitzes/Kedrenus, as well demonstrated above. My earlier paper concluded that the Primary Chronicle composer kept most basic factual information and tried to follow the storyline of his source. This could be well observed in the number of similarities between Skylitzes and the PVL. These methods and textual structure left the composer much room to develop new accounts about Olga, to invent speeches, to speculate on the reasons for Sviatoslav's actions, and thus to narrate an ample story of Sviatoslav's achievements as well as to redesign his defeat by following an established narrative model. At a metatextual level, the story of Sviatoslav's death exemplifies the point the composer makes several pages earlier in the dialogue between Olga and Sviatoslav when she offers him to accept Christianity. After his refusal, the composer concludes:

шнъ же не послуша мт҃ри и твораѧше норовы поганьскыѣ аще кто мт҃ри нє слушаєть в бѣду впадає ѣкож реч҃ аще кто шц҃а или мт҃рь не слушаєть см҃ртью да оумрєть (PSRL 1908, 52; PSRL 1926, 63)

After the 971 treaty, the composer amplifies his point:

и реч҃ єму воєвода штень Свѣнделъ поиди кнѧже на конихъ школо стоѣть бо Печенѣзи в порозѣх҃ и не послуша єго. (PSRL 1908, 61; PSRL 1926, 73)

The composer only knew from his Byzantine source that the Pechenegs ambushed and killed Sviatoslav; so he had to invent a story presenting this death as an example of how misfortune follows disobedience to parents and guardians.

This method of uncovering the hidden messages in the PVL's accounts demonstrates one of the avenues to interpret its text. At a metatextual level one may ask what intentions underpinned the insertion of 971 treaty and devise an explanation why its terms did not comply with provisions recorded in Byzantine sources. The Russian-Byzantine treaties occupied certain role within the PVL composition. Each heathen prince had to subdue non-Rus tribes and states, to campaign against Byzantium, to sign treaty with the Byzantines, and to die in bizarre way by divine provenance (Oleg), at the hands of his subjects (Igor), or slain by enemies for disobeying, guardian's wise advice (Sviatoslav).

The emphasis on Basil and Constantine in the treaty, and the reference to "съ бг҃одх҃новенными цc҃ри" suggest that the composer saw the temporal length of this treaty as longer than the reign of John Tzimiskes (d. 976). Since this is the last Rus-Byzantine treaty in the PVL before Vladimir's 988 baptism, I suggest it should be regarded as part of the conversion story constructed by its composer. Viewed from this perspective, the provisions which contradict the historical context in Byzantine sources on the negotiations between Sviatoslav and John Tzimiskes could well find their correct explanation. Vladimir broke all the terms of his father's treaty with the Byzantines, which were in force during the reign of Basil II and Constantine VIII

(976-1025). Sviatoslav promised:

да ащє инъ кто помꙑслиⷮ на страну вашю да азъ буду противєнъ єму и бьюсѧ с нимⷨ. (PSRL 1908, 61; PSRL 1926, 73)

In the 980 annual entry the Varangians demand more tribute from Vladimir and he refuses. He then directs them to Constantinople and sends envoys to warn the Byzantines.

и рѣша Варѧзи сѣльстилъ єси нами да покажи ны путь въ Грѣкы ѡнъ жє рєⷱ идете изъбра ѿ нихъ мужа добры и смыслены и храбъры и раздаѣ имъ грады прⷪчии же идоша Цⷱрюграⷣ и посла преⷣ ними слы гл҃ѧ сице цⷱревї се идуть к тебѣ Варѧзи не мⷪзи ихъ дѣржати в городѣ или то створѧⷮ ти въ градѣ ѣко здѣ но расточи ѣ раздно а семо не пущаи ни єдиноⷮ (PSRL 1908, 66-67; PSRL 1926, 79)

The 971 treaty proscribed Rus attacks on Bulgaria and Chersoneses, while the 985 annual entry states:

Иде Володимиръ на Болъгары съ Добрынею оуємъ своимъ в лодьѣхъ а Торкы бєрегомъ приведе на конехъ и тако побѣди Болгары. (PSRL 1908, 71; PSRL 1926, 84)

And also, the 988 entry points out:

Иде Володимеръ с вои на Корсунь граⷭ Грѣчкыи.

(PSRL 1908, 94-95; PSRL 1926, 109)

The composer saw Vladimir as having to capture Chersoneses for purpose of converting to Christianity there:

ѿвѣщавъша же боѣрѣ и рѣша аще лихъ бы законъ Грѣчкыи то не бы баба твоѣ Ѡлга приѣла крⷱщениѣ ѣже бѣ мудрѣиши всиⷯ чл҃вкъ ѿвѣщав же Володимѣръ рєⷱ то кде крⷱщниє приимемь. (PSRL 1908, 94; PSRL 1926, 108)

The breaches of the 971 Russian-Byzantine treaty saved the PVL composer from having to construct more detailed prelude to the Rus baptism account. Vladimir had to breach the treaty in order to adopt Christianity. The composer had information on Vladimir's conversion and deeds from diverse lives and sermons compiled by monk Jacob in the 1070s (Бугославский 1925, 151). He projected these events back to the time of Sviatoslav and inserted them into the account of the 971 treaty.

By exploring the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 from various perspectives and explaining its terms within the literary context of the PVL, I propose a clarification of three questions: why this treaty differed from the rest of tenth-century Russian-Byzantine treaties; why the PVL and Byzantine sources disagree on its provisions given their common source; and why the PVL referred to no other Russian-Byzantine treaties despite flourishing relations between two parties following the conversion of Vladimir to Christianity in 988.

Due to the Primary Chronicle's chronographic structure, most of its researchers tend to overlook the fact that it was scripted in a monastic *milieu* in association with the Prince's court for the purpose of explaining how the Rus princes and people converted to Christianity and where they were positioned in divine plans. Hence, the Primary Chronicle is not reliable as a source of historical information for much of the tenth century, but endures as a monument to Rus perceptions of the world

and their role inside it in the early twelfth century. Within the framework of coded messages in the Primary Chronicle, the 971 treaty plays a fictional role. It differs from the rest of tenth-century Russian-Byzantine treaties as there was historical information about it in the written source used by the PVL composer, and because of its fictional role in the PVL for playing part of the transition story between the pagan past and the Christian present. Most likely, negotiations between Emperor John Tzimiskes and Sviatoslav reached a verbal agreement, since Byzantine sources have no record of a written treaty. The composer had a miscellany of historical and theological texts at his disposal. One of those historical treatises was a compilation of accounts copied from the chronicle of George the Monk and another one close to the work of John Skylitzes for the period post-948. The Primary Chronicle composer reworked the data in his written source and forged the Russian-Byzantine treaty of 971 by incorporating into its text Philotheos, Byzantine envoy to the Pechenegs, recorded as Theophilos by John Skylitzes, and a number of historical figures within the list of signatories. In this way the treaty presaged the baptism of Rus, as Vladimir broke all its terms by divine provenance and adopted Christianity as consequence of his disregard. For these reasons the Byzantine authors and the Primary Chronicle differ on the 971 treaty and whether it was actually embodied in the form and content rendered in the latter.

Finally, once Vladimir broke the 971 treaty and converted to Christianity, there was no need to incorporate any other Russian-Byzantine treaty into the Primary Chronicle, though such agreements were concluded by Vladimir and his successors with Byzantine emperors later in the tenth and in the eleventh century. We may safely infer that their relationships were regulated and stipulated in written form following the Russian campaigns against Chersoneses in 988 and Constantinople in 1043. Malingoudi demonstrates that Byzantine diplomatic exchange with the Italian city-republics was rather frequent in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the same might be surmised for any Byzantine commercial partners, including the Russian principalities headed by the Kievan Prince. None of these texts did serve the PVL composer in his aims and we find no trace of them in the eleventh- and twelfth-century events covered by the Primary Chronicle.

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